

Washington, George
[Middlebrook, NJ]

March 21, 1779

[Plate image and transcript of
a "valuable" letter, written by
George Washington to Gen.
Benjamin Tallmadge.]

Mount Vernon July 12th 1773

Genl.

I had but just closed my Letter of the 10th which goes by this opp^y, & contains my Invoices, when I received advice from Mr. Hill of the Tobacco, which he either had, or intended to put on board the Rising Sun, but as it seems to be a matter of doubt whether the Eastern there Crop either had, or would be got to the Ship, I do not know how to ascertain the Insurance of Mr. Bastie's Tob^o by the Hoghead, as he wish if Peterson receives the whole, have 74 Hhd's in that Ship & but 64. if the above Crop is left out, I would therefore have you insure Five hundred pounds upon this Tob^o be it more or less. — My quantity on board of Peterson amounts to Fifteen Hogheads, on which you may insure about One hundred pounds. —

Inclosed you have Invoices of such Goods as are wanted for Mr. Bastie's Estate & Ware upon York River, which please to send as there directed. — I imagine the Bale of Cotton which Mr. Hill some time ago wrote me word was damaged can not be much injured as he has said nothing further on this subject in his last Letter. —

Should my Neighbour and Friend Col^o. Fairfax apply to you for a few Guinea not exceeding Ten or a Dozⁿ to assist in burning some Rents and other Mourning Trinkets for Miss Bastie please to let him have it and you will very much oblige

Yours Most Obedt Serv^t

Geo Washington

the foul satyr's eyes leer out of the leaves constantly,
the last words the famous author wrote were bad & wicked
the last lines the poor stricken wretch penned were
for pity & pardon. — I think of these past writers &
of one who lives amongst us now & am thankful for
the innocent laughter & the sweet unsullied page
which the author of David Copperfield gives to
my children.

J'te sur cette boule,
Laid, chétif, et souffrant;
Étouffé dans la foule,
Faute d'être assez grand;
Une plainte touchante
De ma bouche sortit;
Le bon Dieu me dit: Chante
Chante pauvre petit

Chanter ou je m'abuse,
Et ma tâche ici-bas.
Tous ceux qui ainsi s'amuse,
Ne m'aimeraient-ils pas?

In those charming lines of *Héranger* one may fancy

A castaway on the great world
A weak child of his humble birth
And homely features
Whom the world's the world of wrong
I thought to find in the wrong
Poor young creature
Then crying in my loneliness
I prayed that heaven be my witness
Gone and not being
And feeling my misery
My guardian angel said he
Sing good songs
Since then my quest is not so deep
I know my lot the same my hands
And chant my story
And kindly voice clear the words
And gentle words the song raised
Woke love to pity.

WASHINGTON (GEORGE). A. L. S., 4 pp. 4to.

Middlebrook, Mar. 21, '79. To (Gen. Benjamin Tallmadge).

* A DOCUMENT OF THE UTMOST HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE AND VALUE; OCCUPYING FOUR FULL PAGES, WITH A POSTSCRIPT; IN SUPERB CONDITION.

"Sir--With this Letter you will receive Fifty Guineas for S-C-r which you will cause to be delivered as soon as possible, with an earnest ex-ortation to use them with all possible economy as I find it very difficult to obtain hard money, I wish C-could fall upon some more direct channels by which this Letters could be conveyed...As all great movements, and the fountain of all intelligence must originate at and proceed from the head Quarters of the enemy's army, C-could better reside at New York--mix with--and put on the airs of a Tory to cover his real character, and avoid suspicion. In all his communications he should be careful in distinguishing matters of fact, from matters of report... Particular attention is to be paid to the arrival, & departure of all Fleets--and the alterations, in the cantonments of the Troops and their respective movements with the destination of them, if to become at, and before it is too late to profit by the knowledge... P. S. I wish merely for curiosity, and that I may be prepared with sufficient knowledge for any future contingency, to know the depth of water through Hell-Gate?--the largest ship of War that had ever passed it?--and the largest that can pass it?"

The signature to the body of the letter is his usual one, "G. Washington." while that affixed to the postscript is "G. "n."

